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Contact: Paul Mounds 860-278-8888/860-539-4924

Sec. Gates to Congressman Larson-JSF Extra Engine "Simply Makes No Sense"

Sec. Gates: "I firmly believe that the interests of the taxpayers, our military, and the JSF program are best served by not pursuing an extra engine."

Washington, DC.- Secretary of Defense Robert Gates reiterated his position against the F-35 extra engine program, calling it wasteful and unneeded in a letter to Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01). He wrote that he will advise President Obama to veto any legislation containing further funding to the program. [\(Click here to read Secretary Gates Letter to Congressman Larson\)](#)

Secretary Gates wrote the following in his letter to Congressman Larson:

"I firmly believe that the interests of the taxpayers, our military, and the JSF program are best served by not pursuing an extra engine. Despite the continued opposition by the DoD (Department of Defense) under two Administrations, Congress has provided \$1.3 billion in unrequested additional funding for continued development of this program. We have reached a critical point in this debate where spending more money on an extra engine simply makes no sense and diverts limited modernization funds from more pressing DOD priorities."

“Given the many pressing needs facing our military and the fiscal challenges facing our country, we cannot afford a business as usual approach to the defense budget. Tough choices must be made -by both the department and Congress -to ensure that current and future military capabilities can be sustained over time. This means programs and initiatives of marginal or no benefit -like the F136 engine -are unaffordable luxuries.

“Accordingly, as I have stated repeatedly, I will strongly recommend that the President veto any legislation that contains funding for an extra JSF an unneeded engine.”

The letter by Secretary Gates is in response to a letter written by Congressman Larson on May 21st 2010. In his letter, Congressman Larson asked that Secretary Gates provide his position on issues concerning the extra engine program, including whether to continue funding the program

[\(Click here to read Larson’s Letter to Sec. Gates\)](#)

Congressman Larson stated, ***“President Obama, Secretary Gates, and I are all of like minds when it comes to this issue. This letter proves that Secretary Gates is committed to ending this misguided program. In a time in which we are facing two wars and a budget deficit, we must make tough choices to reduce the waste in our spending. The Department of Defense has fully vetted the information, and has determined that the extra engine program is a prime example of wasteful spending that will not serve the best interests of our military or taxpayers. I am proud to call Secretary Gates a partner in this fight.”***

Congressman Larson is leading the fight to end the F-35 extra engine. The House of Representatives is expected to vote on the Department of Defense authorization bill on Thursday.

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